

Int'l Appl. No. : PCT/CN2003/001086
Int'l Filing Date : December 18, 2003

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the Claim Form and Claim as follows. Insertions are shown underlined while deletions are ~~struck through~~. Please add Claims 14-18.

1 (original): A method for preparing liquid, comprising the steps of preparing liquid and a material for liquid preparing at the beginning; obtaining a prepared liquid at the end; and the following steps of:

(1.1) distillation and absorption, wherein said distillation means that said material for liquid preparation is heated by a steam with high temperature to release volatile substances and soluble substances when the steam is delivered to a sealed space with an outlet at the bottom thereof and said absorption means that the steam mixing with the volatile substances is forced out from the outlet to be dissolved and absorbed in the liquid.

(1.2) immersion, wherein said immersion means that the soluble substances in the step (1.1) dissolves in the liquid which is pressed into the sealed space through the outlet or a defined inlet due to an air pressure difference created when stopping to deliver the steam with high temperature to the sealed space allows the steam in the sealed space to cool down to water so that an air pressure in the sealed space becomes negative with respect to outside of the sealed space; and

(1.3) repetition, wherein said repetition means that the steam is supplied to the sealed space to recover the air pressure therein so as to force the liquid out of the sealed space through the outlet and the step (1.2) and the step (1.3) are repeated according to a specified requirement.

2 (original): The method of claim 1, wherein said liquid is water or water solution in which said volatile substances and soluble substances dissolves and said sealed space comprises an intermediate material layer with a variable thickness for the material, a hollow upper layer, a hollow lower layer and a separation web plate to isolate the intermediate material layer from the lower layer.

3 (original): The method of claim 1, wherein a steam with high temperature in the step (1.1) is forced into the upper layer of the sealed space, goes through pore spaces of the material in the intermediate material layer, distill the material, enters into the lower layer together with the volatile substances, and then is forced out through the outlet.

4 (original): The method of claim 1, wherein a period of time for one distillation and absorption may be set for 0.3 to 10 minutes and a period of time for one immersion may be set for 0.3 to 8 minutes.

5 (original): The method of claim 1, wherein the specified requirement in the step (1.3) refers to ending the step (1.3) when the number of repeat times is more than that of the predetermined times which is equal to or more than two, otherwise redoing the step (1.1) and the step (1.2).

6 (original): The method of claim 1, wherein the specified requirement in the step (1.3) refers to ending the step (1.3) when the material for liquid preparation is found to primarily release the volatile and soluble substances and when the volatile and soluble substances are dissolved and absorbed in the liquid, otherwise redoing the step (1.1) and the step (1.2).

7 (currently amended): A device for preparing liquid, comprising:

a steam generator 2 for generating the steam with high temperature comprising a housing, a heater 1 inside the housing, a water level controller 3 at the upper portion of the housing, a sealing cap 4 for a water fill-in outlet at the top thereof and a pressure valve 5 at the top thereof; a material chamber 8 for holding the material having a sealing top cap 7, an outlet pipe 10 at the bottom thereof, and a separation web plate 16; an intermediate switch valve 6 connected between the steam generator and the material chamber, which is used for controlling an entry of the steam with high temperature into the material chamber 8; and a liquid container 11 for holding the water in which the volatile and soluble substances is dissolved and absorbed, into which the outlet pipe 10 extends.

8 (currently amended): The device of claim 7, further comprising a bypass return pipe 13 wherein one end thereof is connected to the outlet pipe 10 and the other end thereof is connected to the upper portion of the material chamber 8, a one-way valve 15 connected between the outlet pipe 10 and the material chamber 8, and a one-way valve 14 connected between the bypass return pipe 13 and the material chamber 8.

9 (currently amended): The device of claim 7 or 8, wherein the steam generator further comprises a water intake device, a water intake switch, the water level controller 3, the intermediate switch valve 6, the heater 1 and an electric circuit for testing and controlling water intake.

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10 (original): The device of claim 9, wherein the device is a device for preparing traditional Chinese medicine liquid.

11 (original): The device of claim 9, wherein the device is a device for preparing medicated bath liquid.

12 (original): The device of claim 9, wherein the device is a cooking device for preparing soup.

13 (original): The device of claim 9, wherein the device is a device for preparing beverage for drinking.

14 (new): The device of claim 8, wherein the steam generator further comprises a water intake device, a water intake switch, the water level controller, the intermediate switch valve, the heater an electric circuit for testing and controlling water intake.

15 (new): The device of claim 14, wherein the device is a device for preparing traditional Chinese medicine liquid.

16 (new): The device of claim 14, wherein the device is a device for preparing medicated bath liquid.

17 (new): The device of claim 14, wherein the device is a device for preparing soup.

18 (new): The device of claim 14, wherein the device is a device for preparing beverage for drinking.